

/The New Uighurs/

563 mutual courtesy. In addressing one another they use the polite
576 form of you. The same politeness is demonstrated between wife
and husband. Parents use the equivalent of "thou" to address
their children, servants or workers. Upon meeting a friend or
entering a friend's house they say "As-salam Alaikum," and the
reply is "Alaikum as-salam." They inquire about the health of
the family, then bow and shake hands. Only women kiss when
they meet, and only if they are related. When they part they say
"Khosh," or "Allah Akbar," meaning, "The Lord is great."

563 The more religious women pray before eating or starting to
576 do something. Washing the hands before and after meals is man-
574 datory. Bowls of water and towels are provided at a feast or
264 banquet table, and hands are washed between courses. When a
1782 hostess serves refreshments to a guest, the guest rises, bows
and says "Ishqallah," meaning thank you. Polite speeches are
made by both host and guest on the guest's arrival and depart-
ture. Good manners are regarded as important.

4. Superstitions and taboos

563 The New Uighurs attach superstition to almost everything.
771 They believe in witches, ghosts, charms and talismans. As
mentioned before, they believe in the powers of local saints and
1776 heroes, to whom they have dedicated innumerable shrines, and
1778 certain superstitions connect these shrines with the curing of
disease and the bearing of children. Ancestor worship is also
1769 strong among them, as shown by the popular names of the
shrines.

• 1756 The people are also firm believers in witch-doctors, and in
1755 magic powers that cure disease, induce love, or sow enmity
1789 between people. Ghosts are much feared, especially the ghost of
a Chinese. People regard the Urumchi Road from Kashgar as a
563 haunt for Chinese ghosts. They believe that if one is haunted he
771 may be able to propitiate the ghosts by leaving money on his
775 doorstep overnight. If the money is gone in the morning, the
1782 ghosts have taken it and will make no further trouble. They also
1825 have a superstitious dread of snakes, and believe that if one
kills a snake, its mate will haunt him.

563 The New Uighurs try to maintain an everlasting fire in their
372 fireplaces, to bring prosperity to the house. Ashes from the
fireplace are carried out at night or before sunrise, for to clean
1777 the fireplace and take out the ashes during the day may bring
misfortune to the household. They fear thunder, and during a
563 thunderstorm they pray for deliverance from threatening danger.
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5. Religious celebrations and festivals

563 Like the festivals of Moslems the world over, the festivals of
796 the New Uighurs are deeply colored with religious influence.
Besides Fridays, which are generally celebrated, the people
have only three main holidays, Rōse-hāyt, Kurban-hāyt and

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563 religious in character and testify to the strength and popularity of
538 Manichaen doctrines among the Uighurs. The most famous of
175 these religious documents is Khoustuanit, noted in particular
for its linguistic purity.

[997] In the eleventh century, two new religious trends made an
[777] impression upon the Uighurs—Nestorian Christianity and Bud-
dhism. The existence of both these religions and their influence
upon the Uighurs is confirmed by a few religious texts found in
the area which date back to that period. These religious texts
seem to be mainly translated works rather than original cre-
ations.

There were scarcely any secular documents found in Uighur.
However, there is one noted secular work which was written
toward the end of the eleventh century—the Kudatku Bilik. This
work was written by Yusuf from Balasagun, then serving in the
court of Boghra Khan. The work is concerned with the secular
ruler, the nature of his office and his duties to those governed
by him. It gives many historical details about the court life at
the time and the political and social life of the Uighurs. Con-
trary to the religious Uighur documents, which do not show
Islamic influence, this work was obviously written under the
influence of Islamic and Arabic culture. Greek ideas, which
were adopted by the Islamic culture, appear in this work. Thus
knowledge and science are put above material gains and glory
as the important possessions in life.

• [756] Strong remnants of Shamanism are also evident, side by side
with the Islamic ideas.

After the eleventh century, we find no more Uighur docu-
ments of literary value.

Turkic Chagatai literature is a product mostly of the Timurid
age after the Mongol conquest of Turkestan. The main repre-
sentatives of the Chagatai literature are Mir Ali Shir Nevayi in
poetry and the Emperor Babur in prose. Mir Ali Shir Nevayi
lived in the fifteenth century and served in the court of Hussein
Baikara. He mastered both the Chagatai and Persian languages
and wrote in both. He introduced many Persian stylistic devices
into the Chagatai verse. Nevayi gained wide recognition for his
creativity and leadership in the field of Chagatai poetry. The
Emperor Babur, who lived only forty years after Nevayi, wrote:

"Ali Shir Beg was celebrated for the elegance of his man-
ners, and this elegance and polish were ascribed to the con-
scious pride of high fortune; but this was not the case—they
were natural to him, and he had precisely the same manner
when he was in misfortune in Samarkand. Indeed, Ali Shir Beg
was an incomparable person. From the time that poetry was
first written in the Turkish language, no man has written so
much and so well. Some of his Persian verses are not bad, but

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779 up to the ankles. A special provision is made for those to whom
515 water is not available because of their being on a journey or being sick, etc..."and if you are sick or on a journey or one of you came from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and hands therewith." (5:6) A complete ablution of the body is required when the body has been soiled to a greater extent. Though not always strictly observed, these religious habits are followed quite closely by the majority of the population.

2. The predominant diseases in Sinkiang

164 The predominant diseases in Eastern Turkestan which were recorded by Grenard and Pevtsov are the following: goiters, syphilis, gonorrhea, smallpox, scabies, tuberculosis, the Baghdad boil (a disease brought over from the Middle East), rheumatism, often connected with the effects of venereal diseases, trachoma and other eye illnesses, dental troubles, inflammation of the joints, malaria and some cases of leprosy. Skin diseases are very common among the population. The Eastern Turks seldom change their clothing, including their underclothes, and their fur hats are hardly ever taken off. This often results in the growth of parasitic vermin. The excessive dust and dirt are very conducive to the spread of skin diseases. Unfortunately, no figures are available on the incidence of different diseases. Most feared are the epidemic diseases which spread rapidly and the incurable diseases, like leprosy. There is a popular proverb in [515] Eastern Turkestan that says the following: "Flee from the leprous as you would from a lion."

3. The local doctors

759 The two most popular types of doctors in Eastern Turkestan
756 are those who practice Arabic medicine, and those who practice witchcraft. Arabic medical science is fairly well developed and includes some knowledge of human physiology, methods of curing certain diseases and even some surgical techniques. Most of the mosques have hospitals attached to them for the care of the ill and the injured. However, the knowledge of those doctors practicing Arabic medicine in Eastern Turkestan is quite limited. There has been no great progress in their methods since the 11th and 12th centuries. According to C.P. Skrine, the witch doctors are much more popular than the Islamic doctors. The witch doctors are called bakhshis in Yarkand and du'a-khwans or jadugars in Kashgar. The fees of the witch doctors are relatively high, and the more famous of them are very well-off. In return for their fees they compose spells and perform incantations to drive away the demons which possess the patient.